

**U.S. EMBASSY  
ABU DHABI**

**Elections 2014**

**Your vote counts!**

Did you know that many recent U.S. elections have been decided by a margin smaller than the number of ballots cast by military and overseas voters. All states are required to count every absentee ballot as long as it is valid and reaches local election officials by the absentee ballot receipt deadline.

Follow a few simple steps to make sure that you can vote in the 2014 U.S. elections:

**Registering to Vote:**

Complete a new Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). Even if you have voted by absentee ballot in the past, you must complete a new Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) to vote in the 2014 elections. The FPCA is accepted by all local election officials in all U.S. states and territories. It allows you to register to vote and to request absentee ballots for all regular, primary, run-off, and special elections for federal offices (President, U.S. Senate, and U.S. House of Representatives) during the course of the year it is submitted in.

You can complete the FPCA online at [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov). The online voting assistant will ask you questions specific to your

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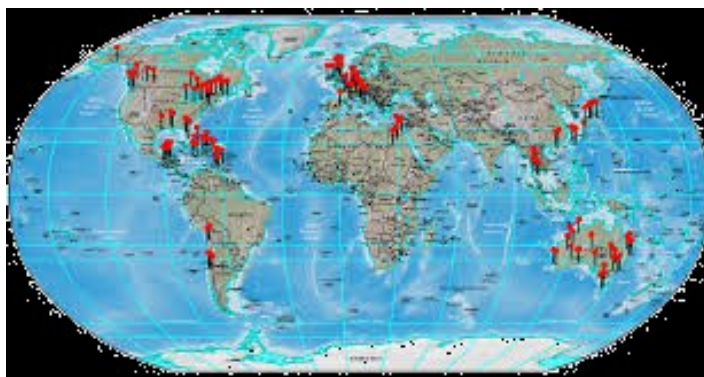
# American Citizen Services

MARCH 2014

## Happy 2014 Travels

**The start of a new year is an excellent time to check the expiration date of your child's (and your) passport. New passports take about 2-3 weeks for Embassy Abu Dhabi to process.**

- Make sure you have a signed, valid passport, and a visa, if required for your destination and transit countries and fill in the emergency information page of your passport.
- Information on entry/exit requirements for many countries is found on the Country Specific Information pages at: [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov).
- Do you need at least six-month validity on your passport for travel to your destination country? ([travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) will tell you in the Country Specific Information)
- Enroll in the Smart Traveler Program (STEP) so that your family and the State Department can contact you in an emergency; leave a copy of your travel itinerary, passport data page and credit card with a trusted family member or friend. For more, visit: <https://step.state.gov/>
- Ask your medical insurance company if your policy applies overseas, and if it covers emergency expenses such as medical evacuation. If not, consider buying travel insurance.
- Familiarize yourself with local conditions and laws; while in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws.



## Upcoming holiday Schedule

### Embassy Closed:

- May 26: Memorial Day
- May 27: the Prophet's Ascension Day \*
- July 3: Independence Day (observed)
- July 29-31: Eid Al Fitr\*
- August 31: Labor Day
- October 4: Arafat (Haj) Day\*
- October 5-6: Eid Al Adha\*
- October 12: Columbus Day
- October 25: Islamic New Year\*
- November 11: Veterans Day

\* Denotes UAE religious holidays which are dependent upon the sighting of the moon and are likely to vary from the above.

## Pre-Clearance Available at Abu Dhabi International Airport

....Preclearance operations allow CBP [Customs and Boarder Patrol] to staff officers at host airports and complete the same inspectional processes of passengers as at a domestic port of entry. CBP officers are in uniform, and have the legal authorities to question travelers and inspect luggage.... This process allows the aircraft to arrive at a domestic airport gate in the United States and travelers to proceed to their final destination without further CBP processing, a major efficiency for travelers....Currently, CBP operates 14 air preclearance locations in five countries: Canada (Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver and Winnipeg), Ireland (Dublin and Shannon), The Bahamas (Freeport and Nassau), Aruba and Bermuda....

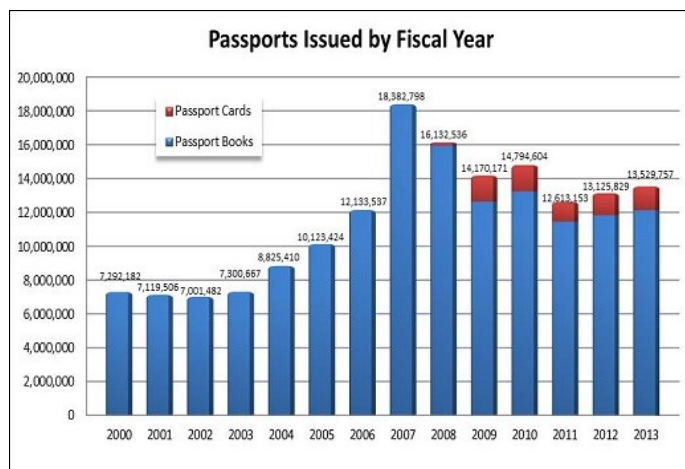
Source: Written testimony of CBP Acting Deputy Commissioner Kevin McAleenan for a House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade hearing titled "The Abu Dhabi Pre-Clearance Facility: Implications for U.S. Businesses and National Security" <http://www.dhs.gov/news/2013/07/10/written-testimony-cbp-house-foreign-affairs-subcommittee-terrorism-nonproliferation>, accessed January 29, 2014



## New Design at travel.state.gov

Travel.state.gov has been re-designed to better meet the high demand. It gets about 370 million visitors a year.

When you use it, remember it has two audiences — those living abroad and those living in the United States.



## The Smart Traveler App

Available for both Android and iPhone, provides easy access to your STEP account and allows you to create personal itineraries, add notes, and organize your trips. Not only that, but it provides quick access to our Facebook and Twitter pages.

## Stay Connected and Informed

### Smart Traveler Enrollment Program

The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service provided by the U.S. Government to U.S. citizens who are traveling to, or living in, a foreign country.

STEP allows you to enter information about your upcoming trip abroad so that the Department of State can better assist you in an emergency.

STEP also allows Americans residing abroad to get routine information from the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate. **Please include or update your enrollment with a valid email address. We can't send important information to invalid addresses.**

Let us know you live here.  
<https://step.state.gov/>



## ...ACS in Al Ain's ASC continued

state. It will tell you if your state allows the FPCA to be returned electronically or if you must submit a paper copy with original signature.

### Receiving Your Ballot:

**Request Electronic Delivery!**  
States are now required to send out ballots 45 days before a regular election for federal office (President, U.S. Senate or U.S. House of Representatives) and states generally send out ballots at least 30 days before primary elections. No matter which state you vote in, we encourage you to ask your local election officials to deliver your blank ballots to you electronically (by email, internet download, or fax, depending on your state). Be sure to include your email address on your FPCA to take advantage of the electronic ballot delivery option. You can now also confirm your registration and ballot delivery online for most states.

### Researching the Candidates and Issues:

**Online Resources.** Check out the FVAP links page for helpful resources that will aid your research of candidates and issues. Non-partisan information about candidates, their voting records, and their positions on issues are widely available and easy to obtain via numerous websites such as Project Smart Voter. You can also read national and hometown newspapers on-line, or search the Internet to locate articles and information. For information about election dates and deadlines, subscribe to FVAP's Voting Alerts ([vote@fvap.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov)). FVAP also shares Voting Alerts via Facebook and Twitter.

### Returning Your Completed Ballot:

**Other Options.** If your state requires you to return paper voting forms or ballots to local election officials, you can do so free of charge at the nearest embassy or consulate. They must be in either postage paid return envelopes or in envelopes bearing sufficient domestic U.S. postage, and

must also be addressed to the relevant local election officials.

(Insert post-specific instructions for how voters can submit forms and ballots to the consular section to be returned to the United States via pouch, APO, or DPO. Please also include voting assistance hours if they differ from the normal voting materials drop off instructions and normal pouch transit times from post back to the United States.)

If it's more convenient for you, you can also return your FPCA or ballot to your local election officials via international mail or professional courier service at your own expense.

Learn more at the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) website [FVAP.gov](http://FVAP.gov). If you have any questions about registering to vote overseas, please contact (Post's name)'s Voting Assistance Officer at (Consular Section public phone number), or at (post specific vote-post@state.gov address).



The U.S. Embassy is closed on U.S. and local holidays, we provide only emergency response services outside normal business hours. To book

an appointment for an ACS service, please visit

[Abudhabi.usembassy.gov](http://Abudhabi.usembassy.gov)

**In an emergency, call the embassy (02) 414 2200 and ask to speak to ACS. After hours, you will get the Marine Guard at Post 1 and ask to speak to the duty officer.**

### TAXES? TAXES!!

Taxes are due April 15 and the Embassy does not provide tax advice. From [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for U.S. Citizens residing abroad:

If you are a U.S. citizen or resident alien, the rules for filing income, estate, and gift tax returns and paying estimated tax are generally the same whether you are in the United States or abroad. Your worldwide income is subject to U.S. income tax, regardless of where you reside.

**When to File:** If you are a U.S. citizen or resident alien residing overseas, or are in the military on duty outside the U.S., on the regular due date of your return, you are allowed an automatic 2-month extension to file your return and pay any amount due without requesting an extension. For a calendar year return, the automatic 2-month extension is to June 15.